

NEW BIKES

ONZA PAYOFF

£1,599 / 29in / todayscyclist.co.uk

Onza's two-wheeled debut is a retro-inspired hardtail with a modern touch

NEED TO KNOW

- Classy 4130 cro-mo steel-framed hardtail
- RockShox Revelation fork with 120mm travel
- Wide tyres and 29er wheels give grip and comfort
- Just two sizes, 17 and 19in, limit the Payoff's appeal

Onza's been on the mountain bike scene for around 25 years, producing tyres, grips and bars in the 1990s and then trials bikes in the Noughties. It's taken until now, though, for the brand to produce its first mountain bike, the Payoff: a 29er hardtail complete with retro steel tubing that looks straight out of the last century.

Don't be fooled though, the Payoff is like a hipster with a Macbook — trendy, up to date but with retro styling. To start with, the bike has a single-ring drivetrain with no provision for anything as uncool and cluttering as a front mech. Onza uses its own brand narrow-wide 32t chainring, too.

The frame itself is made from good-old-fashioned 4130 cro-mo steel, but it's been electroplated to prevent corrosion. It's sometimes beautiful and sometimes a bit odd looking: the modern tapered head tube



Hourglass chainstays artfully increase tyre clearance

sits at odds with the skinny tubes it butts up against. Then there's the big forged yoke at the confluence of the BB shell and chainstays — it looks like something from the late, great, Fred Dibnah's workshop. But then there are touches of genius too; the sweep of the chainstays around the rear wheel gives loads of tyre clearance, and the curved brace connecting it to the seatstays is neat.

The own-brand Onza controls work fine, the bar shape looks pretty funky but it's wide enough and feels right. Only the overlong stem spoils the party.

The Payoff is a comfortable place to be, thanks to the slim stays and the long, thin seatpost. The oversized Kenda tyres feel bigger than their advertised 2.35in — more like 2.5in, not Plus-sized, but pretty close — and provide a surprising amount of cushioning and grip, even on really muddy tracks. I ran them at just 20psi without the carcasses rolling or suffering a pinch flat. Together with the RockShox Revelation fork, it gives the Payoff a controlled and fun feel. Given the frame's quality, and the fact it can handle the latest 27.5in Plus wheels too, the Payoff would make a great longterm investment... if you can afford its hefty price, and get comfortable aboard it, as there are only two sizes to choose from.

Jamie Darlow

mbr 1ST IMPRESSION

✓ HIGHS

Delivers a comfortable and engaging ride.

✗ LOWS

Expensive, and good luck squeezing a dropper post in.

SPECIFICATION

Frame 4130 cro-mo
Fork RockShox Revelation Solo Air, 120mm
Wheels Weinmann XC180, Kenda Slant Six 29x2.35in tyres
Drivetrain Onza 32t, Shimano SLX Shadow r-mech and shifters
Brakes Shimano BR447
Components Fizik Gobi saddle, Onza alloy bar, stem and seatpost
Sizes 17, 19in
Weight 14.0kg (30.9lb)

GEOMETRY

Size ridden 19in
Rider height 6ft 11in
Head angle 69.1°
Seat angle 73.2°
BB height 308mm
Front centre 704mm
Chainstay 442mm
Wheelbase 1,146mm
Top tube 565mm